

ADVANCED Economic Development LEADERSHIP

A Professional Development Process for Senior Economic Developers **October 14-17, 2024, Kauffman Conference Center, Kansas City, MO**

The Advanced Economic Development Leadership program is an experiential course designed by four partner universities specifically for senior professionals. This deep-dive instruction seeks to help economic developers re-imagine their role while providing innovative, leading-edge applications to address local challenges, exciting opportunities, and new ways to impact the community.

The past few years have brought turbulence to America's communities and regions. But, despite uncertain times, the professional economic development community enjoys some of its most exciting opportunities.

A Curriculum Designed to Be Different

- **SITE SELECTION MONDAY** featuring three Site Selection Guild members focused on challenges and opportunities in business and industry recruitment in these exciting times. From the May 2024 class, Site Selection Monday faculty were Mark Williams, President of Strategic Development Group; John Longshore, Newark; and Gray Swoope, president of Vision First Advisors and former Secretary of Commerce for Florida and Mississippi.
- **Fired Up, Burned Out or In-between** – Dr. Robert Prescott
Economic developers face expected and unexpected stress that impacts their personal and professional lives. It's all around us, with expectations, successes, and disappointments. How we handle stress quite often determines our effectiveness and ripples throughout the organization.
- **Talent at a Crossroads Across America** - Kate McEnroe
Workforce challenges are now more complex than ever. Forty percent of U.S. working-age adults are on the sidelines, presenting challenges and opportunities to grow the workforce pipeline through targeted local skills-based training. This session examines pathways to grow a skilled workforce to fill the demand for new and existing businesses and strategies for moving those on the couch to productive careers.

- **Effective Negotiation Strategies – Dr. Rita Kosnik, Texas Christian University**
Negotiation is something that professional economic developers encounter daily. This interactive session examines negotiation techniques and strategies for project management, staff, community interaction, and everyday decisions.
- **Managing Change in Turbulent Times Requires Disruptive Leadership**
Leaders can influence change for economic success, even in uncertain and turbulent times. This session explores the importance and inevitability of change and how professionals can channel change into positive action through disruptive leadership.
- **Change the Way You Communicate: Why You Should, How You Can – Author, Communications’ Expert Ken Haseley**
Professionals who communicate effectively get others to listen to, understand, and act on what is said. Communicating effectively involves eliminating comfortable but outdated and self-defeating phrases, gestures, and bad slides. Ken’s lessons apply to prospect visits, media interviews, and speeches.
- **The Global Economy and its Impact on Economic Development Strategies**
Dr. Gary Wagner, economics professor at Louisiana State University at Lafayette, outlines the effects of the past two years on supply chains, the U.S. economy, and the impact of global events on everyday job creation. His sobering session will cause a hard look at what we can expect as we approach the 2024 elections.
- **Breakout Sessions for Rural and Urban Cities**
Frank, open discussion on topics related to America’s urban and rural communities. These breakout session topics are decided by the class and produce some of the most informative lessons of the week.
- **Behavioral and Communication Attributes Applied to the Professional Economic Developer**
This top-rated session reviews personal and professional communication by examining four individual speaking approaches: Analytical, Conceptual, Structural, and Social. Dr. Ed Nichols’ session is always evaluated by the class as the most entertaining, informative, and applicable to the economic developers’ war chest.
- **HGTV’s Home Town Takeover’s Lessons that Apply Everywhere.**
Shellie Whitfield, Wetumpka’s chamber director and star of HGTV’s Home Town Takeover, outlines lessons that any city can apply based on the transformation in Wetumpka, Alabama.

What AEDL Graduates are Saying About the Program

AEDL brought together mid-career and senior-level economic developers looking to push themselves to be better, think more, and think more broadly. The contacts made here within

*teams lend themselves to more meaningful long-term collaborations and friendships than just the usual economic development gathering...***James A. McMillian, Cherokee Nation Businesses**

*The Advanced Economic Development Leadership program provides relevant topics in an executive-level format and everything necessary to help in your success as a top-level leader without the unnecessary BS...***Sean Mallot, Central Florida Development Council**

*One of the best programs I've participated in during my career...***Will Williams, Aiken (SC) Economic Development**

*A nicely structured, professional learning and networking experience to engage with like-minded economic development practitioners...***Jay Schwedler, Sumter (SC) Economic Development**

*After almost 20 years in the economic development sector, I found AEDL to be a motivating and refreshing experience...***Jody Lassiter, Duke Energy**

*The AEDL program enhanced both my leadership skills and my economic development knowledge. The inclusion of four top universities in the development of the program was evident in the topics covered and the discussions held. This program is a MUST for top-level professionals...***Trudy McCarthy, Florida's Space Coast**

*AEDL gave me the opportunity to collaborate with EcD professionals from across the country. We shared our visions and challenges and built relationships with people we normally see as the competition. We all know that economic development is a team sport, and I'm grateful that AEDL helped me realize that this team can be much bigger and that working together will transform what we do for the better...***Erin Schneider, Duke Energy**

*Attending AEDL was a great way to learn from economic development professionals from across the country. The wealth of knowledge and experience that the participants and instructors brought to the table was astounding, and I walked away from the course better prepared to help my community...***Manny Salazar, Kingsville (TX) Chamber/EcD**

*I would describe my AEDL experience as both challenging and rewarding. There is a premium placed on engagement, and with some of your brightest peers from across the country in attendance, you feel like you want to "bring your A game." It was really a treat to be in the presence of so many seasoned, highly motivated economic developers. The instruction and facilitation were "top of the class..."***James Steven Dykes, Charleston (SC) Econ. Development**

*The AEDL program is the best educational training in which I have ever had the privilege of participating. This program goes far beyond the usual basic training we are all accustomed to. AEDL challenges each participant to look internally and discover the strengths and weaknesses of the participant. In addition, you will respond to new ways of thinking about economic development...***Michael Bockorny, Aberdeen (SD) Economic Development**

*AEDL was an amazing opportunity to build upon my economic development knowledge and network...***Jenny Kuderer-Radcliffe, Dairyland Power**

*The program covers an array of interesting and relevant topics. However, the best part of the program is the friendships created, the multiple ways of addressing opportunities by so many fellow practitioners, and the level of instruction provided. It truly embodies what I feel an “advanced” program should entail...***Stephen Calvin Wray, Augusta Economic Development**

*I especially appreciated the interactive sessions and the way that the AEDL staff and instructors pushed us to think outside the box and get out of our own individual comfort zones. Keep up the great work, and thank you so much for the opportunity to be part of the “best class ever.”...***Paula Hazlewood, Advance Southwest Iowa**

*One of the most rewarding programs I have taken during my career in economic development. The material and content were good, but the ability to brainstorm and work in teams with other professionals was priceless...***Merle Johnson, Greenville (SC) Economic Development**

Program Benefits

- An experiential learning approach that relies on debate, discussion, teamwork, and interaction rather than many lectures. Lessons from the week are designed to be applied back home.
- A very reasonable fee for the week-long, intensive program (\$1,795) includes materials, a reception, lunches, and a world-class curriculum and faculty.
- Four key university partners – Texas Christian University, the University of Southern Mississippi, the University of New Mexico, and Valdosta State University.
- Experienced world-class faculty – site consultants, seasoned economic development professionals, academia, business leaders, authors, and subject experts.
- Smaller class size (40-45) to ensure active, interactive learning, discussion, teamwork, and debate.
- Interaction and networking with professionals from across the U.S. facing similar challenges and opportunities – life-long professional relationships.
- The biannual AEDL Graduates Conference is scheduled for March 2025.
- Central U.S. class locations for easy travel.
- A *Master Economic Development Practitioner (MEDP)* certificate from the partner universities.